

WE ARE ONTARIO

APRIL 21 DAY OF ACTION AGAINST CUTS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ontario Federation of Labour Executive Board Meeting, April 2, 2012





NEW AFFILIATIONS TO THE OFL SINCE JANUARY 30, 2012

NEARLY 100,000 MEMBERS JOINED THE OFL FROM 2009-2011 AND ANOTHER 900 MORE HAVE JOINED IN JANUARY 2012:

CAW 103

398 MEMBERS

CAW 229

500 MEMBERS

TOTAL

898 MEMBERS



The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) represents 54 unions and one million workers. It is Canada's largest provincial labour federation.

President's Report, Ontario Federation of Labour, Executive Board Meeting, April 2, 2012

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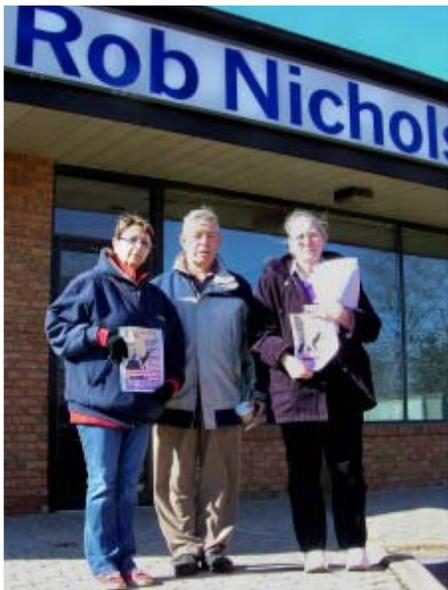
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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A Grey/Blue Alliance occupied Tory offices all across the province to protest cuts to Old Age Security. At a public townhall held in Oshawa, three area Conservatives refused to face constituent concerns.



Labour Forms Alliance with Seniors to Defend Pensions

Public outrage boiled over in late January after Prime Minister Stephen Harper made an unexpected domestic announcement about plans to cut seniors pensions while addressing the international elite at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

“We’ve already taken steps to limit the growth of our health care spending ... we must do the same for our retirement income system,” announced the Prime Minister from the other side of the Atlantic as he triggered a national furor over the future of Canadian retirement security. In the days that followed, it became clear that the Harper government was considering plans to either reduce Old Age Security (OAS) pension benefits or increase the eligibility age from 65 to 67. In either scenario, this move would jeopardize the livelihoods of some of Canada’s most vulnerable people.

The majority of seniors currently live on \$25,000 a year or less and the average monthly OAS payment is a meager \$508.35. Meanwhile, Harper is spending billions to reduce corporate taxes while he continues to refuse minor increases to Canada Pension Plan contributions that would double CPP benefits for all seniors.

The OFL responded quickly to the announcement and mobilized affiliates, local labour councils and

seniors to form a new coalition to defend retirement security, called the “Grey/Blue Alliance.” Two weeks after the announcement, the OFL, along with retirees, pensioners and workers, organized the simultaneous occupation of 20 Tory constituency offices all across the province.

“Prime Minister Harper’s hypocrisy is stunning. He announced his plans to cut Old Age Security in front of the one percenters in Switzerland when he knows full well that if he were to retire in 2015, he would have a Platinum-Plated, taxpayer-funded pension of \$223,517 a year,” said OFL President Sid Ryan, from the occupation in Finance Minister Jim Flaherty’s Whitby constituency office.

With scores of angry residents shutting down offices in so many locations, this impromptu action attracted mainstream and community press in every corner of the province. Determined to keep the pressure on the Harper government, the Durham Region Labour Council, the OFL and the newly formed Durham Grey/Blue Alliance, organized a townhall meeting in Whitby and called on the three Conservative MPs from the area, Jim Flaherty, Bev Oda and Colin Carrie, to respond to public concerns. Though the parliamentarians refused to address their constituents, the event kept the issue in the media, garnering local and national attention.



University of Guelph students join the occupation of the Fergus Office of Hon. Michael Chong MP.

“OAS pensions are what pays for food and rent for seniors living on a fixed-income and it helps the others get by with a little bit of dignity. Harper is about to learn the same lesson that seniors taught two prime ministers before him: if you touch seniors’ rights, you do so at your peril,” said Orville Thacker, President of the Ontario Federation of Union Retirees (OFUR).

Harper’s announcement began to unravel around him after a Youtube clip from 2005 resurfaced in which Harper pledged that his government would “fully preserve Old Age Security, the Guaranteed Income Supplement and the Canada Pension Plan and all projected future increases to these programs and we will build on those commitments.” Shortly afterwards, his own Parliamentary Watch Dog, Kevin Page, forecasted the long-term sustainability of public pensions and calling out the government for a lack of credibility.

The OFL has pledged to keep working through the labour alliance with pensioners to keep the pressure on Harper to protect retirement security.

20 TORY OFFICES OCCUPIED!

- Eve Adams (Mississauga–Brampton South)
- Harold Albrecht (Kitchener–Conestoga)
- Jay Aspin (Nipissing–Timiskaming)
- Peter Braid (Kitchener–Waterloo)
- Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington–Halton Hills)
- Dean Del Mastro (Peterborough)
- Barry Devolin (Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock)
- Hon. Jim Flaherty (Whitby–Oshawa)
- Hon. Gary Goodyear (Cambridge)
- Hon. Bal Gosal (Bramalea–Gore–Malton)
- Ed Holder (London West)
- Guy Lauzon (Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry)
- Phil McColeman (Brant)
- Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls)
- Kyle Seeback (Brampton West)
- Gary Schellenberger (Perth–Wellington)
- David Tilson (Dufferin–Caledon)
- Susan Truppe (London North Centre)
- Jeff Watson (Essex)
- Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre)

April 21 Day of Action to Kick-Off Campaign Against Cuts

In the wake of the devastating recommendations for deep cuts to jobs and public services that were released in the report of the Drummond Commission in mid-February, the OFL has launched a campaign that will be punctuated by a mass Day of Action at Queen's Park on April 21.

At a time when Ontarians are in desperate need of economic recovery, the McGuinty government is planning cuts that will jeopardize every aspect of society: from health care to child care to pensions. No public service is safe. However, in his reckless plan to balance Ontario's books by putting more people out of work and destroying the social safety net, McGuinty refuses to roll-back corporate tax cuts that are starving the province of billions of dollars.

The OFL's campaign is designed to be a multi-year, multi-union effort to galvanize public opposition to public spending cuts by crafting a coordinated message to expose the government's so-called "austerity measures" as a threat to job growth and economic recovery. An ambitious advertising project is being developed through funds raised largely from affiliates but the actions and events that support the campaign will require the participation and commitment from hundreds – if not thousands – of provincial and local community groups and coalition partners.

The "Ontario Day of Action Against Cuts" has already received nearly 60 endorsements to date from labour and community groups all over the province. On April 21, Ontarians from all sectors of society will mobilize at Queen's Park to send a strong message to Premier McGuinty that he cannot cut his way to economic prosperity and it is time for banks and corporations to pay their fair share.

Affiliates are being asked to send their endorsements to D MacDonald@ofl.ca and mobilize their members to fill buses to Toronto for the 3:00 pm rally.

Together, we must tell McGuinty to serve people, not profit. After all, WE are Ontario.

**Tell McGuinty:
YOU CAN'T CUT YOUR
WAY TO PROSPERITY**

jobs
services

Drummond
Commission

Banks &
Corporations

**DAY OF ACTION
AGAINST CUTS**

**April 21, 2012 - 3 to 5 pm
Queen's Park, Toronto**

 **ONTARIO
FEDERATION OF
LABOUR**

For information and endorsements, visit:
Facebook: <http://on.fb.me/A21NoCuts>
Promote the rally online:
Twitter Hashtag: #A21NoCuts

cop343

SUPPORT THE APRIL 21 DAY OF ACTION

For endorsements and donations, contact:

Duncan MacDonald
416-443-7668 or dmacdonald@ofl.ca

To register your buses, contact:

Carrol Anne Sceviour
416-443-7670 or csceviour@ofl.ca

For questions and information, contact:

Laurie Hardwick
416-571-3087 or lhardwick@ofl.ca

Twitter: #A21NoCuts

Facebook: <http://on.fb.me/A21NoCuts>



OFL Officers Sid Ryan and Irwin Nanda join UNITE HERE Local 75 President Paul Clifford and hotel workers to demand labour law reform. NDP MPPs Jonah Schein, Peter Tabuns, Taras Natyshak and France G elinas show support.

OFL & UNITE HERE Team Up for Labour Law Reform

On March 3, the OFL helped make an aggressive employer attack on Novotel hotel workers front-page news by launching a provincial call for labour law reform. The OFL worked with UNITE HERE Local 75 to land a feature story in the *Toronto Star* about the bully tactics of Novotel, and parent company Accor, and followed-up with a media conference at Queen’s Park. The media publicity provided an opportunity for workers of three Novotel hotels in Ottawa and Toronto to share their experiences of discipline, suspension and termination after they were identified as union supporters.

Despite the global commitment of Accor to “not oppose efforts to unionize its employees,” 14 of 25 union supporters at two hotels have already been targeted for trying to form a union. A union drive taking place at a third Novotel location in North York has not yet gone to a vote and already one union supporter has been disciplined.

“Since I came out in support of the union I’ve been repeatedly disciplined and I was recently threatened with a final warning,” said Ignacio Dadap, a room attendant at the Novotel Mississauga.

The Ontario Federation of Labour argued that the situation faced by Novotel workers underscores the need for new laws to protect low-wage workers,

who are predominantly women, racialized people or new immigrants trying to make a better life for their families.

The OFL called on the Ontario government to implement the following labour law reforms:

- Require that an “Employee Bill of Rights” be posted in every workplace;
- Immediately reinstate workers separated from employment during a union drive;
- Introduce card-based union certification; and
- Establish successor rights for those in the contract sector.

“Every Ontario worker deserves to be able to exercise their democratic rights without fear of reprisal, but current labour laws allow employers to bully, intimidate and fire employees with impunity. There is no such thing as workplace democracy in Ontario,” said Ryan. “We desperately need to bring balance back to Ontario’s *Labour Relations Act* and give vulnerable workers the tools to lift themselves out of poverty.”

The OFL will continue to work with affiliates and through its Union Dialogue on Labour Relations and Union Density Committee to roll out a campaign to defend workers’ right to free collective bargaining.



OFL Heads of Unions present budget demands to Ministers Dwight Duncan and Linda Jeffrey

Ontario Budget Good for Banks, Bad for Families

The Ontario Budget was released on March 27 and contained few surprises since Finance Minister Dwight Duncan had already made clear his intention to implement nearly half of the Drummond recommendations.

Dubbed a “Bankers’ Budget” by the OFL, McGuinty’s fiscal plan delivered the deepest cuts to Ontario families since Mike Harris’ first term but shielded the financial and private sector from sharing the burden of a deficit they helped to create.

While corporations have received billions already through the reduction of corporate income tax from 14 percent to 11.5 percent, social assistance recipients – who now subsist on 1993-level incomes – will see a real dollar cut in their income. By freezing welfare rates at a time when food costs are increasing by four percent per year, this Budget ensures the poorest in Ontario will be living on less.

The severity of this contrast is easily illustrated by the fact that a mere 1.5 percent increase in corporate tax rates could have paid for a 25 percent increase in social assistance rates.

A scheduled increase in the Child Tax Benefit was postponed and not a single cent was allocated to

address the child care crisis, ensuring that some existing centres will close and that parents of children under four years old will be forced out of the workforce to care for their children.

The McGuinty government says it is implementing four dollars in spending cuts for every new dollar generated in revenue, claiming \$17.7 billion in cuts and “cost containment” and \$4.4 billion in revenue generation. On its own, this would be outrageous in its disproportionate approach. But, as economist Hugh Mackenzie notes:

Upon closer look, nearly half of the amount claimed on the revenue side is not a revenue increase. Instead, it is the value of a delay in implementation of a tax cut. The budget increases fiscal capacity by a mere \$1.6 billion, compared with \$10.7 billion in expenditure cuts. And of that \$1.6 billion, roughly one third comes from increased gambling revenue and another third from “revenue integrity measures” — McGuintyspeak for requiring more people to pay the taxes they actually owe.

The McGuinty Budget is bad for Ontario – its people and its economy. If it fails to receive opposition support, it could trigger a provincial election that would serve as a referendum on corporate taxation.

Drummond Commission Recommends Deep Cuts

On February 15, the Drummond Commission tabled its much-anticipated report. Ten months ago, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty appointed former TD Bank Economist Don Drummond to head the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services, to deal with a projected—and likely overestimated—provincial deficit of approximately \$16 billion. The McGuinty government mandated the former banker to propose a budget balancing plan without considering any revenue generating mechanisms, such as rolling back corporate tax cuts or other measures to restore fairness to provincial taxation.

Although not allowed to consider taxing corporations, Drummond recommended a host of user-fee hikes for public services that will hurt women and low-income families the most. Drummond himself admitted that the scale of the cuts he proposes are greater than those imposed by the former Conservative Premier Mike Harris. According to Drummond, the spending cuts he prescribes would be the equivalent of a permanent 16.2 percent cut in the social wage for every woman, child and man in the province.

Drummond also recommended an escalation in the privatization of service delivery; staff reductions; greater management rights to discipline, dismiss and move employees; funding envelopes that do not allow for wage increases, resulting in harsher negotiations; restructuring of the arbitration process to appoint arbitrators in labour disputes, restrict their neutrality and limit their discretion; and more performance pay for management.

If the recommendations are implemented, some economists have suggested as many as a quarter of a million jobs could be lost and as much as \$18 billion removed from the economy at a time when Ontario's recovery is still weak. Moreover, it is expected that thousands of Ontario jobs will be lost as a result of the federal budget expected on March 29, 2012. These kinds of cuts may well trigger a double-dip recession in Ontario.

Union Heads Lobby Finance Minister

On February 15, the OFL's Heads of Unions attended a quarterly meeting with Finance Minister Dwight Duncan and Labour Minister Linda Jeffrey.

A central focus of the meeting was the Drummond Report, slated for release later that same day. OFL President Sid Ryan reminded the Minister that the deficit was not caused by public spending and cautioned that cutting services and middle class jobs could trigger a double-dip recession. The OFL called for corporate tax fairness and other revenue generating initiatives, such as the restoration of corporate taxes to the 2010 level of 14 percent.

At the meeting, the OFL also urged the province to strongly oppose federal changes to Old Age Security (OAS) that would delay the age at which people are eligible for the program. Ryan warned that Harper's cuts would cause an income gap that would have to be filled by the province and municipalities via social assistance programs. Duncan agreed to respond to the Federation's proposal for modest increases to the CPP and agreed with labour's concerns about Pooled Registered Pension Plans (PRPP).

The OFL secured an agreement from the Minister of Labour not to cut \$6 million from employment standards enforcement. Ryan noted that more should be done to ensure proactive enforcement, curb the underground economy and create a level playing field among employers. The OFL argued that the \$64 million that employers owed in unpaid wages and *Employment Standards Act* entitlements, would act as a much-needed stimulus for the economy.

Ryan concluded the meeting by expressing the labour movement's concerns about the lack of pre-budget consultations and all-party committee hearings. In response, Minister Duncan invited the OFL to submit budgetary recommendations at a subsequent meeting in early March.

Pre-Budget Submission to the Finance Minister

On March 9, the Federation's Heads of Unions met again with the Ministers of Finance and Labour, but this time to present the OFL's pre-budget submission. OFL President Sid Ryan and Executive Vice-President Irwin Nanda attended the meeting with representatives from CAW, CUPE, ETFO, IBEW, OPSEU, OSSTF, PSAC, UFCW, and USW.

At the meeting, the OFL officers and union heads presented the ministers with the OFL's 2012 Pre-Budget Submission, as well as a two-page backgrounder on revenue generating options prepared by economists Toby Sanger (CUPE) and Erin Weir (USW). Both documents are available online at www.OFL.ca.

Good jobs for all, strong public services, support for low-income Ontarians and the need for labour law reform formed the basis of the OFL's presentation. In order to fund these important priorities, the OFL called on the government to marshal the necessary public resources by taxing corporations and wealthy individuals fairly.

Overall, Minister Duncan's response contained few surprises. It seemed evident from the meeting that, although the Budget might contain modest measures that labour could support, it would likely reward the wealth and punish Ontario families.

Special Meeting with Labour Minister Linda Jeffrey

At a special meeting with the Minister of Labour Linda Jeffrey held on February 16, OFL representatives Sid Ryan, Nancy Hutchison, Irwin Nanda and Pam Frache began a formal dialogue with the government about labour law reform and employment standards. The OFL highlighted the need to ensure good faith bargaining during collective agreement negotiations, and reminded the Minister of the three guiding principles of arbitration: replication; gradualism; and demonstrated need.

OFL representatives called for a living wage for all workers and argued for new legislation that would better protect workers' right to organize and bargain collectively. Such legislation should prevent interference in union drives and protect union rights. This is particularly important in the contract sector where the competitive bidding process too often results in the replacement of union jobs with non-union jobs.

The Minister agreed to hold regular meetings with the OFL to exchange proposals for labour law reform and develop made-in-Ontario legislation. At an upcoming meeting in April, the OFL is hoping to present proposals on card-based certification and successor rights in the contract sector.

Social Assistance Review

In mid-March, the OFL joined unions, social assistance recipients and others in presenting recommendations to the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario in advance of the release of its final report in June 2012.

The OFL submission criticized the discussion paper for lacking an overriding vision of the role and objectives of the social assistance system for the people of Ontario. The Federation called for the perspectives of social assistance recipients and workers to be reflected in recommendations that are oriented around the following priorities:

- Increasing equality;
- Improving the livelihoods of low-income people;
- Minimizing any disruption of benefit levels, available supports or services for Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) recipients during any period of transition.

The OFL called on the government to ensure that the social assistance system is viewed as a means of assisting Ontarians experiencing acute needs and for improving the economic and social future for all Ontarians. The OFL's submission is available online at: www.OFL.ca



PART 3: HEALTH AND SAFETY & WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Migrant Worker Deaths Spark Call for Protections

A tragic head-on collision near Hampstead, Ontario claimed the lives of 11 people on February 6 and left three survivors in critical condition. The terrible accident occurred when a cargo van carrying migrant farm workers collided with a flatbed truck. The tragedy mirrored recent fatal accidents elsewhere in Canada. However, the Hampstead tragedy claimed the greatest number of workers' lives in a single event since the Westray Mine explosion that killed 26 workers nearly 20 years ago.

The OFL moved quickly to respond to the tragedy and President Sid Ryan secured confirmation from Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB) Chair Steve Mahoney that the victims would receive workers' compensation and family survivor benefits.

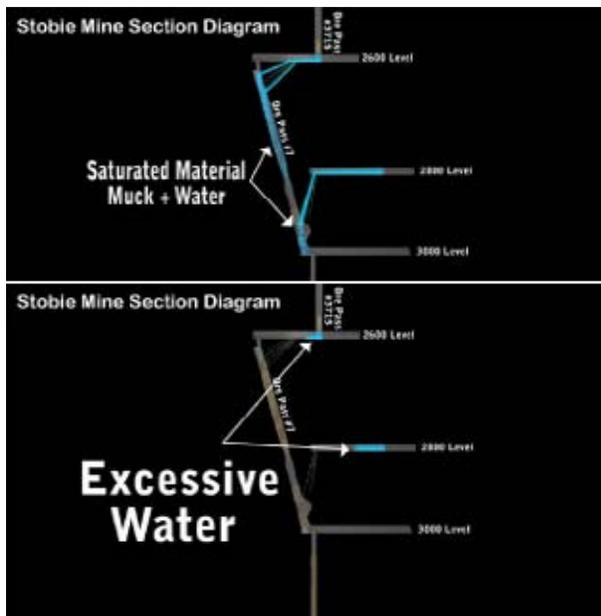
"Ontario needs to address the fact that this tragedy impacted the most vulnerable of workers who were travelling in a van meant for cargo from one of the dirtiest and most unsafe occupations. It is a sober reminder that we need to protect the migrant workers who contribute so much to our economy," said OFL Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison.

The OFL called upon the province to guarantee a Coroner's inquest into the incident and ensure that all levels of government work together to prevent similar catastrophes in the future.

On February 7, the UFCW Canada and Agriculture Workers Alliance (AWA) set up Migrant Workers Family Support Fund to help the families of the injured or killed workers, who include 13 agriculture workers, as well as the driver of the colliding vehicle. By early March, the fund had reached over \$100,000.

Unfortunately, just a month after the Hampstead tragedy, a highway collision in Alberta claimed the lives of four Filipino migrant workers and left another seriously injured. The UFCW hosted Migrant Farm Worker Awareness Week from March 26 to 30 to raise awareness about these and other issues facing workers in these precarious jobs.

To donate to the Migrant Workers Family Support Fund, visit: www.UFCW.ca



USW Investigates Vale Fault in Mining Deaths

In June 2011, two workers at the Stobie Mine near Sudbury, owned by multi-national mining company Vale, were killed when a “run of muck” came crashing down and engulfed them. Within days of the tragedy, the OFL called on the Sudbury Chief of Police to conduct an investigation based on Bill C-45 *Criminal Code* provisions (known as the “*Westray Bill*”), that allow for the prosecution of companies that disregard the health and safety of workers.

For the first time in the mine’s history, the company refused to conduct a joint investigation with the union, so the employer and USW Local 6500 conducted their own, separate investigations.

Within seven months of that incident, another two workers lost their lives in Vale mines in Sudbury and in Thompson, Manitoba. The most recent death occurred on the heels of the release of the company’s report absolving itself of any wrongdoing.

However, on February 29, USW Local 6500 released the findings of a union investigation that painted a very different picture of the tragedy. After hundreds of interviews and extensive research, the investigation revealed a company that had ignored documented concerns about excess water levels and failed to abide by safety requirements.

The OFL supported the USW’s call for a public inquiry into the safety of Stobie and other Ontario mines and for a ministerial committee to review current health and safety legislation and enforcement.

“Vale has tried to whitewash this investigation and hide its responsibility. If the United Steelworkers hadn’t dug up the truth, we would never know how this tragedy occurred,” said OFL Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison.

In the eight years since Bill C-45 became law, over 500 workers have been killed on the job in Ontario but not one employer has been successfully prosecuted.

“We will not stop until every worker death is investigated as a crime. It seems like the only way to convince companies like Vale to put worker safety ahead of production targets is if the bosses get locked up in jail,” said OFL President Sid Ryan.

Meeting with Attorney General on Bill C-45

In February, OFL Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison and Health and Safety Director Vern Edwards met with the Director of the Criminal Policy Branch of the Ministry of the Attorney General to discuss the training of Crown Attorneys on *Criminal Code* prosecutions of negligent employers.

At the meeting, the OFL presented the package of educational material directed at frontline police officers that the Federation sends to police forces each time there is a workplace tragedy.

Ministry officials agreed to update Bill C-45 materials for Crown Attorneys in time for the 20th anniversary of the Westray Mine disaster. They also promised to collaborate with the OFL to educate Crown Attorneys on Bill C-45 provisions. The Ministry invited the OFL to assist with summer and fall training programs for Crown Attorneys. They also promised to provide contact information regarding police colleges.

On April 3, Hutchison and Edwards will be meeting with the Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations of the Ministry of Labour to follow-up on Bill C-45 educational material.

OFL Officers Meet With Chief Prevention Officer

Following up on an affiliate meeting in December, the OFL secured a second meeting with Ontario's New Chief Prevention Officer and Associate Deputy Minister of Labour, George Gritziotis, on February 3, 2012. At the meeting, OFL President Sid Ryan, Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison and Health and Safety Director Vern Edwards lobbied Gritziotis to recommend the appointment of representatives from the OFL, UFCW and CUPE to the Prevention Council. The Federation also called for the non-union spot on the Council to be filled by a representative of the Toronto Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic.

At the meeting, the OFL pressed Gritziotis to support changes to the Council's governance framework that would impose two-term limits on appointments and enshrine the precautionary principle within its governing articles. He responded favourably to concerns about the lack of interactivity in the online worker awareness training program and promised consultations on the supervisor awareness training.

In mid-March, the OFL followed up with the Minister's political staff to provide the names of the labour representatives being put forward to the Prevention Council.

2011 WSIB Death & Injury Stats

436 fatalities were reported to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) in 2011.

93 traumatic on-the-job deaths were reported, but only 73 have been allowed and 10 are still pending.

296 occupational disease related deaths were reported and 209 have been allowed.

240,342 total injury claims were made, but only 184,233 were allowed and 3,700 are under consideration.



OFL Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison lobbies Chief Prevention Officer George Gritziotis at December meeting.

WSIB Policy Consultation

In late fall, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) announced that it was proceeding with a policy consultation agenda that appeared to be based on the KPMG Value for Money Audit. This resulted in a push-back by affiliates and an emergency resolution to the OFL convention. The OFL and members of the WSIB's Labour Injured Worker Advisory Committee to the Chair (LIWAC) met with senior officials at the Board and was successful in changing the course of the consultation process.

The Board has agreed to establish a Consultation Secretariat who will oversee the process and hire an arms-length chair who is respected by the workplace parties. The Secretariat will involve stakeholders in developing discussion papers and identifying key facts, data and information, including jurisprudence from the Tribunal and policies from other jurisdictions.

There will be two discussion papers, one on Aggravation Basis and Second Injury Enhancement Fund, and another on Additional Entitlements: Recurrences, Work Disruptions and Permanent Impairments. Upon concluding the consultation with provincial stakeholders, the Chair will present recommendations and the Board drafting policies and carry out a final WSIB consultation process. This process will serve as a model for future consultations.



PART 4: EQUITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

Community Challenges Discriminatory Racial Profiling

In March, the *Toronto Star* released a controversial report called “Known to the Police” that analyzed Toronto police stop data from 2008 to mid-2011. The *Star* analysis showed that the number of young black and brown males aged 15 to 24 documented in each of the city’s 72 patrol zones is greater than the actual number of young men of colour living in those areas.

Young white males and those designated as “other” did attract some police attention, their rate of questioning did not compare to that of black and brown youth. In some areas, blacks were five times more likely to be stopped by police as whites.

Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair dismissed the possibility that his officers have documented every young black and brown man in certain communities. However, while the data collected by the *Star* do not — and cannot — prove that every young male of colour has been stopped, questioned and documented, they do give rise to serious questions.

These questions were raised by the Black Action Defense Committee (BADC), Toronto Police

Accountability Coalition, the OFL and community partners at a media conference held in Toronto’s “at-risk” Jane and Finch community on March 21, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. OFL Executive Vice-President Irwin Nanda joined a panel of other activists in calling for greater police accountability and an end to racial profiling. Nanda went on to call for government attention to the social and economic inequality facing Ontario’s equity seeking communities.

“Racialized youth are under-represented in unionized working environments and over-represented in precarious and low-income occupations. They are the last hired and the first fired,” said Nanda. “People of colour bore the brunt of the recession but you can be sure that they had absolutely no influence over the financial institutions that created it. Ontario’s shoddy labour laws make it difficult for many immigrant and racialized communities to secure the union protection that can improve their wages and working conditions. Discriminatory policing practices will only exacerbate this problem, not make it go away,” said Nanda.



KI First Nation representatives addressed the hundreds who protested God's Lake mine.

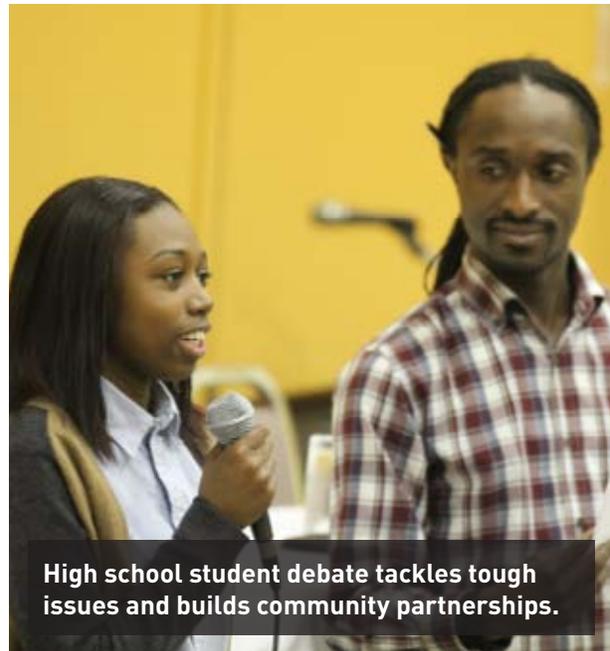
KI First Nation Calls on McGuinty to Stop Mining Giant

OFL President Sid Ryan and Executive Vice-President Irwin Nanda joined hundreds of activists at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre on March 6 to protest one of the world's largest mining conventions. At issue is an ongoing dispute between the people of the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) First Nation and the Ontario government over the access that has been granted to mining company, God's Lake Resources, to extract resources on sacred and traditional land.

"When previous governments allowed the desecration of sacred Aboriginal lands it sparked conflicts that couldn't be contained. The outcome is always unfortunate and often tragic," said Ryan.

Days before the protest, the Ontario government unexpectedly announced that 23,000 square kilometres of KI land would be protected from future mining claims and placed a moratorium on mining activity on the land. This development marked a significant victory for KI but concerns about current mining projects are still outstanding.

To sign on to support KI, visit: www.kilands.org



High school student debate tackles tough issues and builds community partnerships.

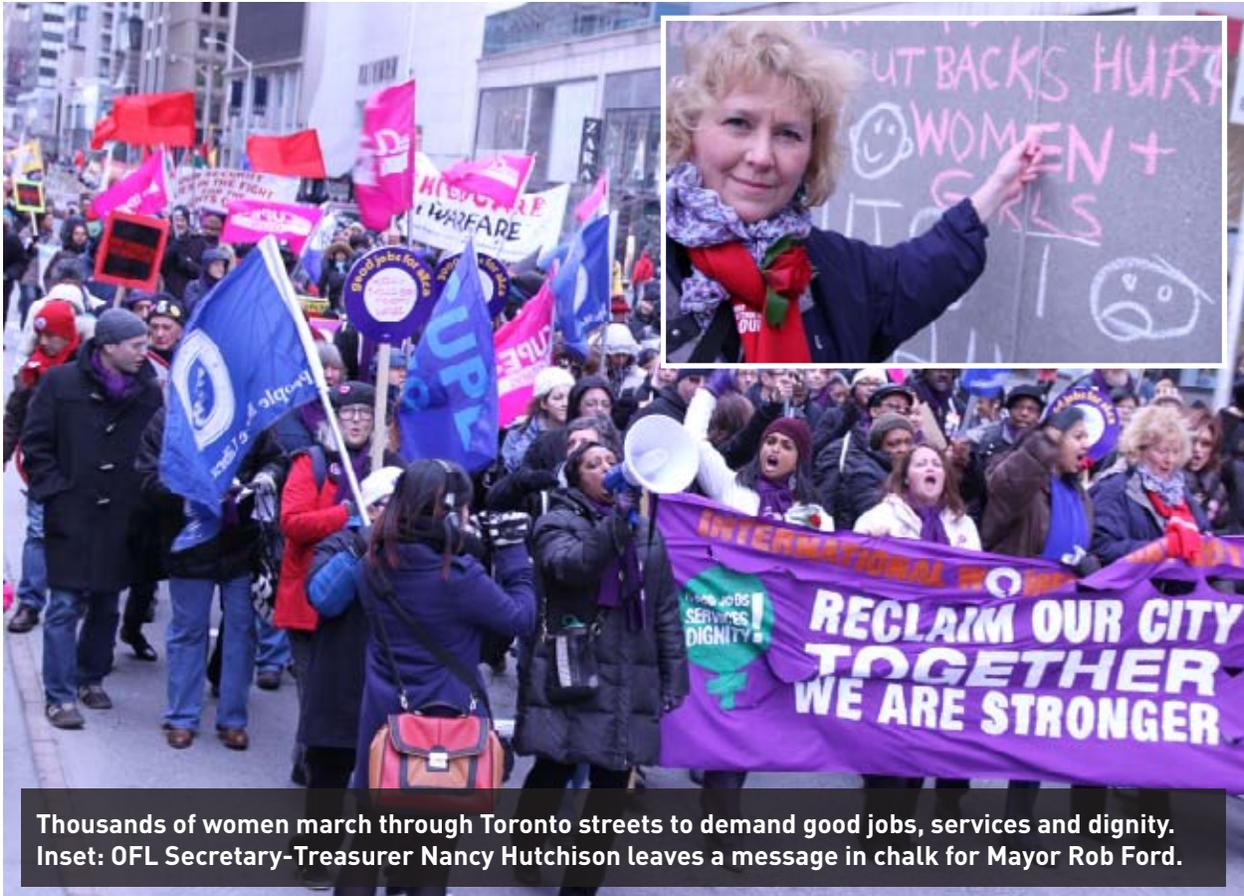
Debate Tournament Brings Racialized Youth Together

On March 8, the OFL partnered with the Black Community Police Consultative Committee (BCPCC) and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) to host "The Great Debate" – an event that brings together high school students to develop debating skills and to tackle the issues of the day.

This was the first time the OFL co-sponsored this four-year-old event and the number of participating students reached nearly 100.

After a series of mini-debates between students, the most lively debate centred on the relevance of public protests in creating social change. The students discussed the role of social media and public demonstrations in challenging authoritarian regimes at home and abroad and pulled no punches in criticizing G20 policing tactics, the attack on civil liberties and police profiling of racialized youth.

However, the weighty debate didn't hinder the constructive tone of an event designed to sharpen public speaking skills and bridge the divide between police and racialized youth.



Thousands of women march through Toronto streets to demand good jobs, services and dignity. Inset: OFL Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison leaves a message in chalk for Mayor Rob Ford.

Women Workers “Rise Up” on International Women’s Day

March 8 is marked around the world as a day to celebrate women and reaffirm women’s rights to full equality. The OFL issued an official statement, under the title “Women are the Majority of the Majority,” and helped to promote events in cities across the province.

This year, the OFL statement focused on the theme of social and economic inequality that was given so much profile during the Occupy movement last year. It also took issue with austerity cuts to jobs and public services being proposed by all three levels of government.

For the second year, the OFL Women’s Committee 2012 March 8th Project produced a commemorative IWD poster and pewter pin that are unique works of art that trade union sisters can display for many

years. The 2012 theme celebrated the diversity of sisters in our movement under the banner, “*Rising Up: Sisters Sharing Hope Vision Solidarity.*”

Affiliates purchased 10,000 pins and ordered 7,000 posters to promote the celebration. The money raised will be contributed to a provincial women’s organization.

To read the OFL statement on IWD, visit: www.OFL.ca

OFL Hosts Equity Retreat

The OFL Equity Committees resolved to participate in a joint retreat in Niagara Falls on the weekend of March 30 to April 1 in order to brainstorm, share strategies, and map out a plan of action for 2012.

The Retreat is being held just outside of the publication deadline for this report so a detailed report on the proceedings will be featured in the next issue of the President’s Report.



PART 5: AWARDS & DISTINCTIONS

Former OFL Director Receives Labour Award

Former OFL Director of Research Chris Schenk was honoured with this year's prestigious Sefton Award for Contributions to Labour Relations. The Sefton Award was presented on March 28, prior to the Annual Sefton Memorial Lecture that was delivered by Toronto and York Region Labour Council President John Cartwright.

Chris Schenk was the Director of Research for the OFL from 1991 to 2007 and has been well respected for his dedication to defending union rights.

The Sefton Award honours individuals who have made a significant contribution to the field of industrial relations. The lecture and award is dedicated to the memory of Larry Sefton, former Director of United Steelworkers District 6. Brother Sefton's career in the labour movement began on the picket line in Kirkland Lake in the gold miners' strike during World War II. He subsequently led the 1946 Stelco strike and later held office in the United Steelworkers of America, eventually becoming the District 6 Director. The Larry Sefton Memorial Lecture is co-sponsored by Woodsworth College and the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources at the University of Toronto.

OFL Labour Honour Roll Scholarship

For 28 years, the OFL has awarded two scholarships for post-secondary studies, worth \$2,000 each, in honour of trade union activists who have made contributions to the labour movement in Ontario.

The deadline for scholarship applications is May 4, 2012 and this year's winners will be announced in late June. Applicants must be a member or child of a member of a local union affiliated with the OFL. Scholarship winners will be selected based on a brief résumé outlining non-academic interests and their community and political activities. Applicants must submit a 1,000 word essay on this year's topic:

"How does the battle of the Occupy movement against corporate greed relate to the values of the labour movement in Canada? In your opinion, is Occupy the template for future political action?"

For application forms, visit www.OFL.ca

HELP HONOUR LABOUR HEROS!

Submit a short biography of a retired or deceased trade unionist who you think should be recognized on the OFL Labour Honour Roll this year.

Send your nomination to: SRyan@ofl.ca



AIL's Daryl Barnett presents a cheque for \$5,000 to OFL President Sid Ryan and Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison for a new scholarship to recognize Jack Layton.

AIL Donates Scholarship to Honour Memory of Jack Layton

On February 22, Daryl Barnett, Canadian Director of Labour Relations for American Income Life (AIL), presented the OFL with \$5,000 for a new OFL-AIL Scholarship to be offered annually in the memory of late NDP leader, Jack Layton. Barnett hopes that the scholarship will support young students who share Jack's vision of hope and optimism to gain access to a public college or university education.

"Jack's ideals are a driving catalyst for positive social change. It is important that young people who share these values get the opportunities that a higher education can afford, so that they can become our next generation of national leaders," said Barnett.

The eligibility criteria and other details have yet to be finalized.



Toronto library workers strike for full-time hours and job security.

PART 6: AFFILIATE AND LABOUR MOVEMENT SOLIDARITY

Toronto Library Workers Strike for Fairness

Contract talks between Toronto Public Library Board and its 2,300 employees broke down on March 18 and the workers walked out to protest concessions that were the most onerous in the history of the library.

The job action is the direct result of the aggressive budgetary cuts that were imposed by Toronto Mayor Rob Ford who had initially proposed library closures before his motion was defeated by Council. Despite this victory for city workers, a 5.9 percent cut in library funding by the City of Toronto, resulted in the deletion of 107 full-time positions.

“Half of our members work part-time, and the vast majority are women living on fairly low incomes,” said Maureen O’Reilly, president of the Toronto Public Library Workers Union, CUPE Local 4948. “Despite this, the Library Board has blindly followed the lead of the City of Toronto and demanded concessions at the bargaining table that would take away the rights of part-timers to have a decent quality of life and full-time opportunities.”

The OFL produced hundreds of solidarity signs on the first morning of the strike and distributed them during a massive rally at Toronto City Hall. Thousands more of the signs were distributed at picket lines outside library branches in the following days to showcase the broad public support for these public servants. OFL staff and all three OFL officers joined the rally of over 1000 library workers where Ryan called for strong union solidarity to support the library workers in taking on the Mayor’s agenda.

While City of Toronto outside workers, represented by CUPE Local 416, managed to reach a final hour settlement with the city in February, the inside workers, represented by CUPE Local 79, are gearing up for their own battle with the Mayor.

Renowned Canadian author Margaret Atwood added her voice to the growing public support for the library workers. Hopefully this popular support will make it untenable for the city to maintain its aggressive bargaining position with both of the unions.



Gutsy Air Canada workers “slow clap” Labour Minister Lisa Raitt during wildcat strike.

Wildcat Strike at Air Canada

On the eve of the NDP Convention, while delegates from across the Country made their way to select a new leader, Air Canada flights were delayed or grounded by an impromptu wildcat strike by ground crew workers.

The 24-hour action started in Toronto and quickly spread to Montréal and Québec City. It was triggered by the surprise suspension of three workers on March 22. What was their crime? Apparently, they are guilty of “slow clapping” federal Labour Minister Lisa Raitt as she walked through Toronto’s Pearson Airport and sarcastically telling her she was doing a “great job” for undermining collective bargaining rights.

Worker solidarity and public support from across the country assisted the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) in negotiating a resolution to the job action that ensured that no striking worker was fired.

Federal Workers Fight to Keep Services Running

On March 1, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) coordinated a National Day of Action to oppose Prime Minister Harper’s “Austerity Budget,” slated for release on March 29. Thousands of government workers protested outside their workplaces during lunch hour rallies that were successful in generating media attention and raising awareness about the more than 80,000 jobs that could be lost if Harper’s plans are implemented.



PSAC’s Sharon DeSousa demands protection of 80,000 public service jobs at March 1 Rally.

OFL President Sid Ryan joined PSAC Ontario Regional Executive Vice-President Sharon DeSousa and scores of protesters at a Toronto rally, while Federation staff and affiliates joined various actions throughout the province.

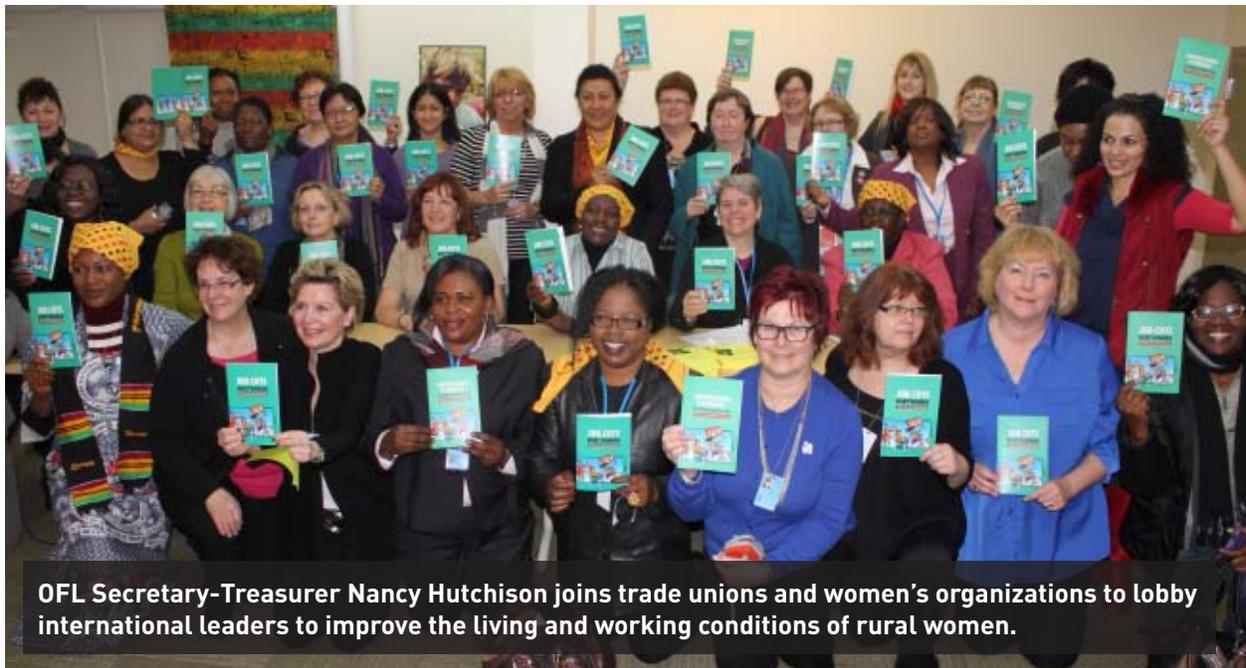
“We aren’t going to sit idly by while Harper dismantles the public sector and slashes the services that Canadians rely on,” said DeSousa.

Caterpillar Closes Up Shop

One month after Electro-Motive Diesel locked out its 460 workers for objecting to a 50 percent pay cut, parent company Caterpillar Inc., shut down the London plant and took the operations to Muncie, Indiana, where workers earn as little as \$12.50 an hour. Many speculated the move was always the end-game of the aggressive multi-national company, which sought to gut the Canadian locomotive train manufacturer of its cutting-edge technology.

The announcement came only a week after the OFL and affiliates organized the largest demonstration in the history of London to support CAW Local 27. The OFL joined the Canadian Autoworkers (CAW) in calling on the Harper government to intervene in the closing of the plant and examine the 2010 takeover of the company by Caterpillar. The CAW has also called on the government of Ontario to reform labour laws to prevent similar robber-barons from stripping Canadian manufacturing assets.

About 36 hours before the announcement of the London closing, Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels signed into law “so-called” right-to-work legislation, which hinders the ability of unions to organize.



OFL Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison joins trade unions and women's organizations to lobby international leaders to improve the living and working conditions of rural women.

PART 7: COMMUNITY AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

UN Status of Women Convention Suspends Proceedings

OFL Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison joined a delegation of trade union women, representing over 70 million women workers from all over the world, who gathered in New York in late February lobby international leaders during the United Nations' 56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW56). Focusing on decent work, quality public services, education, safe housing, human rights and freedom from sexual violence, the trade union delegation called on governments to improve the living and working conditions of rural women.

Unions and women's organizations from Canada and Québec had a large presence at the UNCSW56 and met daily with Canadian government representatives to lobby for a strong national message about the challenges facing women in rural and remote communities, as well as Aboriginal women. They also met with NDP Status of Women Critic, Françoise Boivin.

On February 29, the Canadian delegation of women's organizations and labour unions sent an open letter to the Harper government objecting to the official Canadian statement issued by the Honorable Rona Ambrose, Minister for the Status of Women. Frustrations focused on the Canadian government's failure to consider the role of government and public services, such as public transportation, clean water, health care, affordable housing and quality education, in ensuring women's equality and full participation in society. Other concerns identified the lack of reference to violence against Aboriginal women or the deplorable state of poverty facing many Aboriginal women on and off reserves.

While attending the Commission, Sister Hutchison attended a variety of sessions and worked with international delegates to secure the principles of decent work and public services in the Commission's Statement of Agreed Conclusions.



Student demonstration draws thousands for lower fees.

The Commission was expected to produce a series of “agreed conclusions” on advancing equality for rural women. Once these conclusions are adopted, countries are responsible for regularly reporting on their progress achieving them. Unfortunately the 45 member-state Commission had to suspend negotiations as they had reached a stalemate. The disagreement centred around some states’ attempts to derail agreement on certain key issues, including sexual and reproductive rights. Concern is now being expressed by participants from Non-Governmental Organizations that consensus failed on the basis of safeguarding “traditional values” at the expense of human rights and fundamental freedoms of women.

The Commission did, however, approve a final report as well as some resolutions about the conditions facing Palestinian women, the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls, female genital mutilation, the release of women and children taken hostage and a host of other issues.

Canada’s trade union delegation is now looking ahead at next year’s CSW, which is on the theme of eradicating violence against women.

For more information on the trade union delegation to UNCSW56, visit: <http://unioncsw.world-psi.org/>

OCAP Rallies Against Austerity

On March 16 the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) and hundreds of supporters and allies held a rally at the Ontario Ministry of Housing in downtown Toronto, followed by a boisterous march through Toronto’s financial district. This pre-budget action was designed to oppose the Drummond

Commission recommendations which many feared will be central in the Ontario Budget scheduled for release on March 27. The theme of this action was: “A Living Income, Housing and Quality Public Services for All.”

OCAP is one of many community partners endorsing the OFL’s April 21 Day of Action Against Cuts.

CFS Campaign to Drop Fees

The OFL and a number of affiliates joined the Canadian Federation of Students in mobilizing for rallies and events held throughout Ontario for the February 1 National Day of Action to Drop Tuition Fees. In Toronto, a rally of several thousand students, workers and allies led a march to Queen’s Park as part of the Education is a Right campaign calling for national standards for post-secondary education and increases to transfer payment funding for the sector in the province. Each province also had its own focus and students in Ontario used the Day of Action to pressure the McGuinty government to convert an ill-conceived tuition fee grant into a real fee reduction for all students.

All three OFL officers joined the rally and President Sid Ryan concluded his remarks to the raucous crowd by calling on McGuinty to distinguish his government’s policies from those of the Tories before him.

“Six years ago, Dalton McGuinty boasted that he would be the ‘Education Premier.’ Today, Ontario’s students have the highest fees, the largest debt loads, the biggest classes and the lowest per-student funding,” bellowed Ryan to thunderous applause. “So according to every test of his record as Education Premier, McGuinty has failed!”



PART 8: UPCOMING EVENTS

April 11: “Day of Pink” (or Anti-Bullying Day)

Day of Pink is the International Day against Bullying, Discrimination, Homophobia and Transphobia in schools and communities. Everyone is invited to celebrate diversity by wearing a pink shirt and by organizing activities in their workplaces, organizations, communities and schools.

For more information, visit: www.dayofpink.org

April 13-15: Ontario NDP Convention 2012

The Ontario NDP Provincial Convention 2012 will be taking place from April 13 to 15, 2012, at the Hamilton Convention Centre (1 Summers Lane). Delegate fees are \$310, or \$285 for those who register before March 1.

For questions and registration information, contact: convention@on.ndp.ca

April 21: Ontario Day of Action Against Cuts

From 3 to 5 pm on Saturday, April 21, thousands of workers and community members will rally at Queen’s Park in Toronto to oppose the McGuinty government’s deep cuts to jobs and public services. At press time, more than 60 labour unions and community groups had endorsed the OFL’s call to action.

For more information on the rally, visit: www.OFL.ca

April 28: Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job

Since 1985, April 28 has been recognized across Canada as the International Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job. The purpose of the Day of Mourning is two-fold to remember and honour those lives lost or injured on the job and to renew the commitment to improving health and safety in the workplace in order to prevent further work-related deaths, injuries and diseases. For events in your community, stay tuned to www.whsc.on.ca/events/day_mourn.cfm

May 4: Bromley L. Armstrong Award Dinner

The Toronto and York Region Labour Council will host this year's Bromley L. Armstrong Award Dinner on Friday, May 4 at Spirales Banquet Hall, 888 Don Mills Rd. Social at 6:00 pm and dinner at 7:00 pm. For information, email AFonseca@labourcouncil.ca

May 5: TYRLC Workers of Colour/ Aboriginal Workers Conference

Toronto and York Region Labour Council is holding the 10th annual Workers of Colour/Aboriginal Workers Conference on Saturday, May 5 at the OFL Building (15 Gervais Drive, Toronto). To register, email AFonseca@labourcouncil.ca

May 10-12: OFL Out@Work Conference

From May 10 to 12, the OFL will be hosting the first Ontario gathering of LGBT workers in over a decade, and the second in OFL history. The conference will open with a Community Forum at the 519 Community Centre on Church Street on May 10. From May 11 to 12, Conference sessions will be held at the University of Toronto's Victoria College.

The registration deadline for the conference is April 30. For registration information, visit: www.OFL.ca

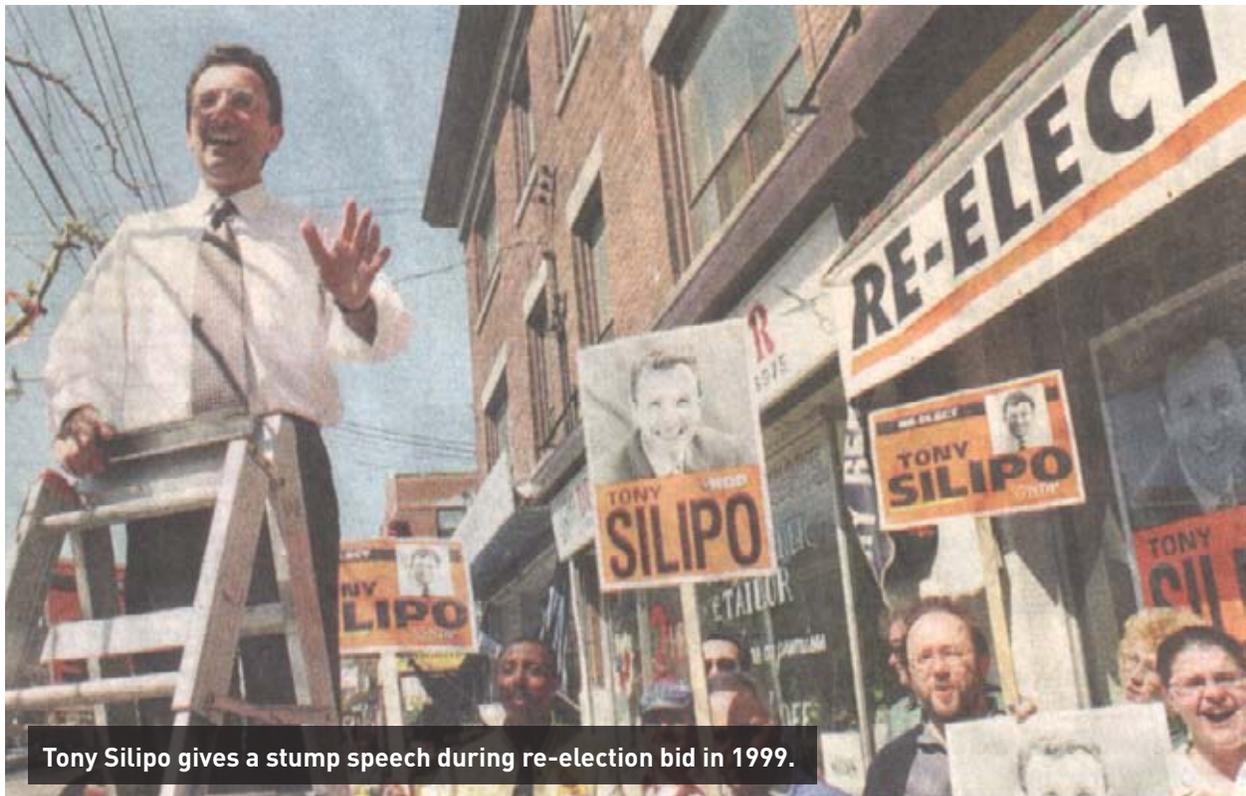
Annual Dates to Remember

- April 22: Earth Day
- April 28: Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job
- May: Asian Heritage Month
- May 1: May Day
- May 9: 20th Anniversary of the Westray Mine explosion which killed 26.
- May 17: International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia
- June 1-7: Sexual Harassment Awareness Week
- June 1: Injured Workers' Day
- June 12: World Day Against Child Labour
- June 21: National Aboriginal Day
- June 27: National Multicultural Day
- July: LGBTQ Pride Month

PART 9: PHOTO CREDITS

All photos in this publication were taken by Joel Duff except the following.

- Page 1 photo by Denise Martins; left spread by various activists
- Page 2 photos by Denise Martins
- Page 9 photo uncredited
- Page 10 illustrations by USW
- Page 15 photo uncredited
- Page 17 photo by John MacLennan
- Page 18 left photo uncredited; right photo and inset by PSAC
- Page 19 photo uncredited
- Page 20 photo by John MacLennan
- Page 23 photo uncredited



Tony Silipo gives a stump speech during re-election bid in 1999.

PART 10: ONTARIO COMMUNITY BUILDER TONY SILIPO PASSES

Former Ontario NDP Cabinet Minister and long-time labour supporter, Tony Silipo, died on Saturday, March 10, 2012 after complications related to a brain tumour. Only 54 years old at the time of his passing, Tony devoted his life to public service and defending the working class.

He was first elected to the Ontario Legislature in 1990 as the NDP member for the Toronto riding of Dovercourt and went on to spend nearly 20 years serving the people of Toronto and Ontario. Under Ontario's first NDP Government, Tony served as Minister of Education and Minister of Community and Social Services. During Howard Hampton's tenure as leader, Tony served proudly as the Deputy Leader of the Ontario NDP. He also served as a trustee on the Toronto Board of Education from 1978 to 1990 and was its chair from 1989 to 1990.

After leaving Queen's Park, Tony continued in public service, working on the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal where he was highly respected by the worker community.

"Tony was a champion of education in this province and he fought strenuously alongside the labour movement against the devastating cuts of the Mike Harris government," said OFL President Sid Ryan. "There is no question that he was held in the highest regard by the labour movement and his solidarity will be long remembered."

Silipo, who was born in Italy, is survived by his wife Anne Marie Miraglia and his son 23-year-old son Adrian Silipo.

ONTARIO DAY OF ACTION

Demand Prosperity, Not Austerity

April 21, 2012 – 3 to 5 pm – Queen's Park, Toronto

Tell McGuinty to serve people, not profit. After all ...
WE ARE ONTARIO

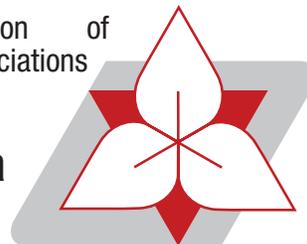
Advocacy Centre for Tenants – Ontario
Alliance of Seniors
Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)
Asian Canadian Labour Alliance (ACLA)
Barrio Nuevo
Barrie Labour Council
Brampton-Mississauga and District Labour Council
Brantford and District Labour Council
Campaign for Public Education
Canadian Arab Federation (CAF)
Canadian Autoworkers (CAW)
Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) – Ontario
Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union (COPE)
Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW)
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
Chatham-Kent Labour Council
Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) (Ontario)
Collingwood and District Labour Council
Colour of Poverty
Committee in Support of Workers' Struggles Iran-Canada
Communist Party of Canada (Ontario)
Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP)
Cornwall and District Labour Council
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)
Durham Region Labour Council
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
Equal Pay Coalition

Grey-Bruce Labour Council
Guelph and District Labour Council
Hamilton and District Labour Council
Huron and District Labour Council
Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC)
International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers (IAMAW)
International Brotherhood Of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA)
Latin American Caribbean Solidarity Network (LACSN)
Latin American Trade Unionists Coalition (LATUC)
Lindsay and District Labour Council
London and District Labour Council
Mayworks Festival of Working People and the Arts
Metro Toronto Chinese & Southeast Asian Legal Clinic
Niagara Regional Labour Council
North Bay and District Labour Council
North Simcoe, Muskoka and District Labour Council
Oakville and District Labour Council
Ontario Association of Interval and Transitional Houses (OAITH)
Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP)
Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics (OCAC)
Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC)
Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA)

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) Action Coalition
Ontario English Catholic Teacher's Association (OECTA)
Ontario Network of Injured Workers Group (ONIWG)
Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation (OSSTF)
Ontario Universities and Colleges Coalition (OUCC)
Ottawa District Labour Council
Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC)
Our Times Magazine
Queer Ontario
Social Planning Network of Ontario
Socialist Party of Ontario
Step It Up Campaign
Toronto and York Region Labour Council
Toronto Women's City Alliance
UNITE HERE Canada
United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW)
United Steelworkers (USW)
Urban Alliance on Race Relations (UARR)
Windsor and District Labour Council

This list is current as of March 29, 2012

For more information, visit www.OFL.ca
Facebook: <http://on.fb.me/A21NoCuts>



**ONTARIO
FEDERATION OF
LABOUR**